

# MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

## Success Stories from the Field

### Edwards Manufacturing

#### Florida Manufacturing Extension Partnership

#### Edwards Manufacturing Undergoes Lean Transformation To Improve Quality And Service

##### Client Profile:

Edwards Manufacturing, established in 1994, is a leading provider of custom point-of-sale and food handling equipment for the food retailing industry. Headquartered in Tampa, Florida, Edwards Manufacturing employs 185 people in three divisions: Edwards Manufacturing (Tampa), Edwards Wholesale (Tampa), and M&H Manufacturing (Atlanta).

##### Situation:

Edwards Manufacturing recognized that to sustain its success in the industry and continue to improve customer service, it needed to find innovative ways to provide the highest quality products in a timely manner. Edwards made the decision to implement lean manufacturing practices with the goal of reducing lead times, increasing quality and productivity, and improving customer service. Edwards sought the assistance of the Florida Manufacturing Extension Partnership (Florida MEP), a NIST MEP network affiliate, to bring about a lean transformation at the company.

##### Solution:

Florida MEP worked with Edwards' management team to introduce the principles of lean manufacturing to key employees. A Lean 101 workshop provided all team members with the knowledge and necessary tools to advance to the next stage of lean transformation. Edwards decided to pilot its lean practices on the aluminum cart product line.

Florida MEP created a value stream map for the aluminum products line, and addressed identified areas of waste and non-value-added activity with a kaizen event and a 5S implementation process. The Edwards "lean team" not only implemented the basics of lean (5S, standardized work, quality at the source, and pull/kanban systems among others) but also utilized the kaizen process to develop a self-contained "flow work cell" to eliminate motion waste. Florida MEP helped Edwards redesign its plant layout to facilitate lean changes, relocating equipment, designing and developing new fixtures, replacing the push method with a kanban/pull system, and converting the entire manufacturing area to a "one-piece flow" balanced work cell.

Improvements on the aluminum cart line included a reduction in throughput time and a 25 percent increase in capacity. Florida MEP dramatically reduced the company's production inefficiencies, and the company is looking forward to

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applying lean on the rest of its production lines.

### **Results:**

Improved product quality and customer service.

Reduced factory throughput time for related products by 30 percent.

Increased production capacity in this work center by 25 percent.

Reduced distance products travel by 92 percent.

Reduced factory floor space requirements by 25 percent.

### **Testimonial:**

"The Florida Manufacturing Extension Partnership staff taught the Edwards employees how to use and think the lean manufacturing techniques. With their help, we have put lean flow cell concepts into the company's overall continuous improvement philosophy and have created a stronger operations management approach to production."

Ron Holland, Vice President, Operations